The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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For the Myrtle.

My Little Boy's Wish.

[This was sent me for home eyes; but thinking it might please the MYRTLE children, I copy and send it to you. *M. F. B.*]

ONE ev'ning, just as darkness
Fell on the land and sea,
I sat in my cozy nurs'ry,
With baby on my knee.

And then my little Ernest,
Grown weary with his play,
As he leaned against me, cried,
"A story, ma, I say."

So I told of all the antics
Of little pet dog "Joe."—
Of kittens without number,
Whose lives were filled with woe.

And then old jolly Santa,
A wondrous tale I told,
About his spacious workshop,
In northern lands so cold.

Then next I spoke of child-life,
When brother and sisters twain
Were in one home so happy,
As we ne'er can be again;—

Of romps with merry cousins,
In racing o'er the sands;—
Of castles on the beach, built
With eager busy hands;—

Of tents pitched on the green-sward,
Where through the summer-day,
We ruled our mimic households
With kind and gentle sway;—

And when the wintry weather
Bro't bright Thanksgiving Day,
Of cousins, aunts and uncles,
Who had such a merry play.

Then, seeing my stories ended,
Ernest, when I was through.
Said, with bright eyes uplifted,
"*I wish I'd been 'round too.*" *M. E. W.*

For the Myrtle.

A Funny Dream.

ONCE upon a time there stood a little cottage on the banks of one of the tributaries of the river Rhine. In it dwelt a poor woman whose only companion was a cat, of which, she was very fond. The old lady's days passed tranquilly away. By spinning yarn, and knitting coarse socks and mittens, she earned the little necessary to maintain herself. Generally she was contented with her lot, and appeared happy. But one day she fell to thinking of the great city and the sights and wonders it contained; then of some distant relations living there; if she could only visit them, then might she know something of bustling city life. But they were rich, she would shame them to appear in their midst clothed in home-spun. She could afford nothing better; and the good dame grew disappointed. She overlooked the blessings by which she was surrounded and sighed for impossibilities, until her face grew to look sad and gloomy, and even old puss wondered what had come over her mistress that she was obliged to beg and roll over three times, to make the dame give her her dinner.

One day the old lady had been more than usually ungrateful, when it chanced that she fell asleep, and from sleeping she went to dreaming.

She thought she stood in a great forest and saw a sturdy wood-chopper fell, one by one, the

tall trees; he seemed as happy as he was busy. As night-fall came on the wood-man, or Max, as we will call him, took his axe upon his shoulder, his dinner pail in his hands and left the woods; The dame followed him, and saw him enter a little cottage—his home. Max soon had a bright fire leaping and dancing in the open fireplace; putting the tea-kettle upon the crane he went to a small barn near by; as he opened the door, a horse within gave him a neigh of welcome, and as Max placed before him an armful of sweet hay Dobbin rubbed his head caressingly against Max's shoulder, and again whinnied his pleasure. A cow standing in a stall received her supper from his hands, then patiently stood, while Max filled his pail with the white mlik which was to help make more palatable his own evening meal. Having refreshed and rested himself, Max buried a log in the glowing embers to keep the fire, then arrayed himself in a clean, white suit of plain clothing and passed out of the cottage, whistling gaily, as he went. He pursued his way to the village, and going to the most pretentious house there—that of the Burgomaster"s—he knocked, and readily gained admittance; although the master of the house often entertained the rich and proud, he didn't think it beneath him to entertain the poor and humble also, for he had discovered that plain clothes as often cover a noble heart, as those of finer texture.

It chanced that on this particular evening the Burgomaster was expecting guests who came by invitation; Max was but just seated when the servant ushered them in. With his usual courtesy the Burgomaster introduced Max to the new comers; two of them showed their gentleness of heart, by treating him as an equal, while the third slightly nodded his head and turned away with a contemptuous look upon his face. Poor Max! he understood at once that he was spurned for his plain clothing; it was his first experience of the kind; as he fully realized the situation, the cheerful, happy look faded from his honest face. The kind Burgomaster looked with a vexed expression at his haughty guest, but when he turned his gaze on Max his countenance assumed a look of pity; for well he knew Max felt the insult keenly. Max soon excused himself; as the door closed behind him, he heard the haughty man say, "I would dispose of property, if I had any, and place a decent suit of clothes upon my back, were I in his place."

"That is the very thing I will do," said Max to himself; without stopping to reason upon the matter, he at once repaired to the house of a rich land owner, who had often expressed a wish to purchase Max's cottage for a tenant and mortgage his property to him—all of it excepting his faithful Dobbin.

The next morning saw Max on Dobbin's back making his way to the city to purchase the suit of clothes, which he, unthinking man, was so eager to possess. His purchases being made Max started for home, with his new suit fastened in a snug package, to the saddle behind him. Everything on the road seemed to sympathize with his state of feelings. The peacocks spread their gay feathers and strutted in full view.

As much elated as he had been depressed Max proceeded on his way. Presently he came to a farm-house from which a man hailed him and asked him to help yard some stray cattle. Kind-hearted Max could not refuse; dismounting he fastened his horse to a post near by, and went to help the stranger. While he was gone a third person appeared and held something to Dobbin's nostrils, then silently departed. When Max returned to his horse, what was his surprise, his dismay, to find Dobbin apparently very sick. The froth was running from his mouth and he trembled violently. The stranger assured Max that his horse needed the care of a horse doctor, and directed him to a fine house in the village near by, where he said the doctor lived.

Max was so completely confused by his misfortune, that he paid not a thought to the package with which Dobbin was laden, although it had cost him all of the sum received for his property.

Immediately he started for the man whom he hoped would relieve his poor beast. On arriving at the house to which he had been directed, imagine his surprise when his knock was answered by the haughty gentleman whom he had met the evening previous, at the Burgomaster's house. In an anxious tone Max made known his business

The man looked at him a moment as it he heard aright, then without a word stepped back into the hall, and returned with a huge riding-whip which he held in a menacing manner over unlucky Max.

Max turned to flee away from his rising wrath, but he was short and stout, and but a poor runner, and a poor chance he stood with the tall, angry man pursuing. Soon was he overtaken and the whip brought with such force about his

stumpy legs that he hopped up as if set on magic springs. Again he ran and again was he overtaken and the same scene enacted, until the tall man, fatigued with his unusual exertion, was willing to let his unhappy victim pursue his way without further molestation.

Sore and heart-sick Max reached the spot where he had left Dobbin tied, but not a trace of him could he find; he searched the house and surroundings but he could find no sign of its having been lately occupied. He began to wonder if he was in his right senses. His aching limbs assured him that he at least possessed a sense of pain. Realizing how shamefully he had been treated, slowly and sadly he made his way home, to the little cottage that to-morrow would see in possession of another. With a terrible pang he thought of Gretchen, his own Gretchen, for whom he had been working, for whom he had purchased the cottage that was to have been, some day, a home for both. All too late he remembered that he had not even asked her advice to the step he had taken. He could not bear his anguish longer and burying his head in his hands he wept aloud. After his gush of tears was over, Max sat moodily by the hearth too much disheartened to be interested in anything. His friend the Burgomaster visited him and advised him to look after the affairs at the barn. Max sadly declined, declaring that the cow was gone, and the morrow would see him with no roof over his head.

After much entreating the Burgomaster induced Max to accompany him to the barn. When Max opened the door he saw the cow quietly chewing her cud, and heard Dobbin's neigh of welcome. In astonishment Max looked into his friend's face to read if possible an explanation there. Then he felt of his limbs to see if the swollen ridges yet remained, and lo! there was no trace of them. Again he turned to his friend for an explanation. This was his answer.

"My friend Max, you have awakened from an unpleasant dream. Let it teach you to be grateful for present mercies; and may you remember. that though your lot may not be all you would choose, you might be worse off than you are now."

With the words of the kind Burgomaster still ringing in her ears the old lady awoke to find her fire all out, and the cat slyly winking at her from the hearth-rug.

So fully had she sympathized with the sorrows of the hero of her dream,—in truth, so well had she taken the lesson to heart, that as she proceeded to rekindle her fire and glanced about her snug room she could not refrain from saying, "a happy woman am I!" Never since has she been known to allow a cloud to rest upon her features, because providence has not seen fit to gratify every wish of hers.

H. H. D.

"Now I Lay Me."

"Mother, may I lay me down to sleep?" said little Jennie one day, though the sun had not yet reached "the noonday mark" on the window-sill.

"We are all very early-risers, ma'am," said Jenny's mother, turning to me; "and our little girl so steadily trudges around, and helps take care of baby when mother is busy, that she always has to take a nap before dinner, so as to be bright when father comes in from the farm-lands.

"Yes, Jenny, daughter. Come and let mother loosen your frock; and you will find the light wrapper on your bed-post." And mother unbuttoned the neat calico dress, which Jenny slipped off over her head, and taking it up carefully, hung it on the low bed-post from which she had taken the light wrapper, or "sleepy gown," as Jenny calls it, which mother keeps for her to take naps in. She then took off her little shoes, and kissing her mother, knelt down right beside her bed, and said reverently, "Now I Lay me"—those simple lines which have been uttered by so many lips before the weary form has been stretched upon its bed to rest.

"Why, Jenny," said I as she laid herself on the bed, "my little ones only say 'Now I lay me' when they go to bed at night."

"Don't they take naps like me when they are tired, ma'am?" said Jenny.

"Oh! yes, my dear! little Lucy almost always takes a nap before dinner."

"Well ma'am, I always want the Lord 'my soul to keep' whenever I lay me down to sleep—always."

"It is a notion of her own, ma'am," said Jenny's mother; "and I think a right and good notion. Whenever she lies down to sleep, she always says this little verse, day or night; and father and I think they need the Lord to watch over them through daylight as well as in the darkness of night."

Grandmother's Portrait.

I LOVE to see a happy group
Of boys and girls at play,
When sunny skies are overhead
On some bright holiday.

How merrily their voices ring
As they their sports pursue!
And how delightful, if their tones
Are kind and joyous too!

But sometimes rainy days are sent,
From God's all-bounteous hand,
To swell the fruit, revive the flowers,
And cheer the thirsty land.

Then no long rambles o'er the fields,
No merry garden-plays:
What shall the children find to do
On wet half-holidays?

Suppose they at the windows stand
And murmur at the rain,
Forgetful that of God's good gifts
'Tis sinful to complain?

Suppose they romp the nursery o'er
And throw about their toys;
And wake the babe, or pain mamma
With rude, unseemly noise?

Now—just suppose one other plan:
Their books and slates they take,
And settle down, with beaming eyes,
Some simple sketch to make.

Remembering rules by teachers taught,
What pleasant pastime theirs,
Thus to improve their powers, the while
They lesson others' cares!

I have been told of one who long
An artist's name has gained,
Whose early efforts first were made
In playtime when it rained:

His Grandmamma in easy chair
Sat full before his eye—
"I'll take her portrait," Robert thought;
"At any rate, I'll try."

And so he tried, and tried again;
His sketch but slowly grew;
Yet still he persevered, and kept
His chosen aim in view.

'Twas done at last, and Robert's heart
Was full of quiet glee,
As he the pictured slate laid down
On Grandma's ample knee.

She did not frown her face to see
A little older grown;
But scanned it with approving smile,
And spoke in kindly tone.

His mother, too, came near to look,
With pleasure in her eyes
And cheering smile—to Robert's heart
More bright than sunlit skies.

Encouraged thus, he persevered,
Still aiming to excel,
And trying not to do so much
As do a little well.

Grown skilful now, his pictures oft
A chief attraction lend
To pages filled with many charms—
The well-known "*Children's Friend.*"

And those who prize the lifelike scenes
By him so well portrayed,
Should bear in mind the cleverest sketch
By single strokes was made.

Dear boys and girls, whoe'er you be,
Employ your leisure well;
A time to romp, a time to rest,
The wise King's words will tell.

And wet or evening hours will be
Most thoroughly enjoyed
When mind and eyes and careful hands
Are usefully employed.

Everybody's Pet.

"What do you think we have got up-stairs, boys?" asked Mr. Grant of the three noisy little fellows who came hurrying into the dining-room at the welcome sound of the breakfast-bell.

"Now put on your thinking-caps, and give your wisest guess. I don't believe you'll one of you'll guess right."

"Oh, yes, well, papa!" shouted the curly-haired Sammy. "Some of us will, I'm sure!"

"Well, sir, you shall have the first chance."

"A whole lot of apples, sir!" said Sam, who, as might be suspected, was very fond of good things to eat.

"No, sir! But you may each give two guesses: so be ready again when your turn comes.—What do you say, Raymond?"

"A new pony, papa?"

"A pony up-stairs, Ray! Who couldn't guess better than that?" cried the other boys, setting up a great shout. Whereupon Raymond, who could never bear to be laughed at, shrunk in great confusion behind his father's chair.

"Now it's your turn, Guy. What do you say, my boy?" Come, be wiser than your brothers; else I shall have to tell you all."

Guy was the youngest of the three,—a dear, trustworthy little fellow, with eyes blue as harebells, and a round, rosy face, which you could never help wanting to kiss. He had climbed up on his papa's knee, and was eagerly waiting for his turn to come.

"Could it be," he whispered close in his father's ear,—"could it possibly be—a baby-sister?"

"Right, my boy!—Guy has guessed wonderfully right, children. Yes, you've got a dear little baby-sister up-stairs; and such a wee little baby she is as you never saw before. How'd you come to guess it, Guy?"

"'Cause I've prayed about it so long, papa,—every night and every morning, for as much as a year, I guess,—ever since Georgie had a baby-sister: that made me know how nice 'twould be."

And now the three little boys had quite forgotten all about their breakfast, smoking so hot upon the table, and how ravenously hungry they had been but a moment before; and all made a rush at the same time for the hall-door to see which would first get a glimpse of the new-comer; and, if it had not been for their papa, they would have gone tumbling up-stairs, and into their mamma's chamber, with a very noisy welcome for the little one.

"Come back here, boys," he called, "and wait until after breakfast!" Why! you boisterous little vandals would frighten the dear baby out of her senses, I am sure, to say nothing of mamma!"

And back they came, not without many protestations, and the promise of seeing the baby the very minute breakfast was over.

Such amazingly small appetites as the boys had on that never-to-be-forgotten morning! Before their papa had hardly begun, they were clamoring the be excused, and wondering if "papa never would be through."

At last, with many cautionary words, he led them noiselessly up-stairs; and there, guarded by a strange woman they had never seen, down among the snowiest blankets, the smiling baby lay; and I am sure never before had any baby three such delighted worshippers at her shrine.

As the days went by, they learned to hold her tenderly, and to carry her about in their sturdy little arms. How proud they were of their burden! never tiring or complaining when there was any thing to be done for Ethel.

Very sweet and fair she grew; so soon becoming the pet of everybody in the house, and the very light of their home. With her gentle, winning way, she ruled her noisy little brothers perfectly, making them quiet and gentle too when in her presence; repressing the childish quarrels which sometimes arose between them by the frightened look which stole into her blue eyes whenever they disagreed.

What a power in that home! We are sure she will keep the dear boys, as she grows older, from many a wrong, sinful way, and brighten their home as only a loving sister can.

"MAMMA," asked a little girl. "where do the afternoons stay when the forenoons are here?"

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—The Sunday School of the united parish, at Amesbury and Salisbury, numbers 170, and is doing a good work. It has monthly concerts, with crowded audiences. The young misses have organized a working society called "The Busy Bees," that meets every week. Besides the social intercourse these Busy Bees do much towards contributing to the support of the school.

—The children of the Sunday School in Marlboro have given the first fifty dollars towards paying the debt on the church. This calls loudly for the rest of the debt to be paid, and it is likely to be accomplished.

—A friend writes us from Westminster: "The Sunday School is in good condition. Their monthly concerts form a very interesting and profitable service. One last Sabbath evening was devoted entirely to the cause of Temperance. The sentiments expressed were varied and impressive, many of them uttered in the lisping tones of childhood, full of that sweetness and purity given only to little children.

—The Sunday School at North Adams was reorganized two years ago, with less than a dozen members. By the labors of the new pastor, Rev. L. Holmes, and other devoted friends, it not only sustained itself but continually increased, until it has 150 members with 15 teachers, 12 of whom are members of the church. The *Helper* lessons are used.

OHIO.

—Rev. N. R. Sage reports to the *Star in the West*, an account of his missionary circuit, and has a good word of various Sunday Schools, as follows: At Whitehouse, Lucas Co. where we have no stated preaching, a good Union Sunday School is kept up, in the management of which the Universalists are interested and well represented. At Caledonia, when Br. Sage preaches a part of the time, he has a "splendid Sunday School" and a conferance meeting every week. At Lodi, where he preaches a quarter of the time, the Sunday School is kept up, with increasing interest. A recent festival, held for its benefit, has left on hand $45 for future needs. At Leroy where there is preaching only a part of the time, the Sunday School grows steadily in numbers and interest.

INDIANA.

—Pierceton, visited by Br. Sage, is without a pastor, but a large Union Sunday School is maintained with many teachers of our faith and many of our library books.

NEW YORK.

—The church in Albany is closed for the present, but the vestry remains open. The Sunday School is regularly continued.

Concert Money.

The Indiana St. Sunday School, Portland, Maine, has discovered a way to avoid taking up a collection at its monthly concerts, and yet to get more money than by that means, and to secure a better attendance at the same time. The Secretary says, in the *Banner:*

"During the months of April, May and October, our penny collections were quite small. This is accounted for from the fact that in those months, we had a Sunday evening concert, and upon those occasions no collections were taken at the session of the school; but each pupil was furnished with a ticket, at a certain price, and the amount thus realized was received into the Concert fund. instead of being placed to the credit of the penny collections. Our plan of operations at these concerts has been to charge a small admission fee, instead of taking up a collection. This plan of procedure, I am happy to say, has worked well. Before its introduction, we were much annoyed by the noise of some who came in to listen to our exercises, and in passing the boxes for the collections, we took notice that the boys and girls guilty of making the disturbance, never gave anything to increase our fund. Now, however, we have no trouble, for all have paid something to come in upon those occasions. and have, to that degree, felt interested in our exercises. We have by the ticket system, often realized the handsome sum of $50, at one concert. Under the old plan of a collecton, $10 was considered a large sum, so we vote it an improvement."

Scientific Pursuits Among Sabbath School Scholars.

The *Leader* condenses from a New Haven, Conn., paper an account of an evening at the parlors of the Universalist church in that place, which will be very interesting, we think, to other Sunday School scholars. It shows that there is no limit to the interesting and beautiful things that may be clustered about a Sunday School.

"The occasion was the return of Joseph Sheldon, Esq., Superintendent of the Sunday School, from an extended tour in Europe. The rooms were elegantly adorned with paintings and flowers, while the supper table was arranged with an eye to the esthetic as well as the physical wants of the guests. A Song of Welcome, written by Miss Ellen Miles, came first upon the programme. Then the feast of the palate and an hour of pleasant congratulations. The pastor, Rev. Phebe A. Hanaford, then read a poem written by herself for the occasion, after which the beautiful song, "Golden Sometime" was sung by eight young ladies. Mr. Sheldon then addressed the School. After this came the presentation of five prizes, three of which were given by Mr. Sheldon to the children who had made the largest collection of leaves of different plants, during his absence. The first prize fell to Miss Etta Thompson, who had made a collection of three hundred and forty-three specimens, and consisted of an elegantly cut cameo-pin. Miss Nellie Bradley received the second prize for a collection of one hundred and forty-three specimens. This consisted of two nicely-bound volumes in green and gold, of the ferns and flowers of Great Britain. Prize number three was awarded to Miss Emma Allen, who had a collection of one hundred and thirty-three leaves, which were very neatly arranged with the flowers of each plant, as far as they could be obtained. She deserved a second prize for nicety of arrangement. She received two volumes of Annie Pratt's "British Flora." Miss Miles then called for the fern collection for which she had offered a prize, and as there was no competition, Miss Etta Thompson received a copy of Shirley Hibbard's "Fern Garden." Then came the prize for the collection of native shells, awarded by Mrs. Hanaford. The largest collection was twenty-six, by Miss Lottie Thompson, and the prize consisted of a volume by H. G. Adams, entitled "Beautiful Shells." At the close of the presentation of the prizes Miss Miles was pleasantly surprised by a presentation from Mr. Sheldon of a large and elegantly bound volume of Annie Pratt's "British Ferns and their Allies." Miss Miles expressed her thanks in a few appropriate words, after which remarks were made by Messrs. G. L. Carrington and L. H. Perkins, when the exercises closed with the singing of a hymn written by Mrs. Lucy M. Creemer."

Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XLVIII.—PAUL.

Question. — By what means did the chief captain attempt to ascertain what Paul had done?

Answer. — Acts xxii. 30.

Q. — What did Paul say to the council?

A. — Acts xxiii. 1.

Q. — What did the high priest order to Paul, for speaking these words?

A. — Acts xxiii. 2.

Q. — What did Paul tell the high priest that God would do to him?

A. — Acts xxiii. 3.

Q. — Why would God smite him?

A. — Acts xxiii. 3.

Q. — What question did the by-standers ask, at these words?

A. — Acts xxiii. 4.

Q. — What explanation did Paul give for what he had said?

A. — Acts xxiii. 5.

Q. — When Paul saw that a part of the council were Saducees and a part were Pharisees, what did he say to the council?

A. — Acts xxiii. 6.

NOTE. The Pharisees believed in a future life and the existence of spirits; but the Sadducees did not believe in a future life, nor in the existence of spirit. And the two sects earnestly discussed the opinions in which they differed. See verse 8.

Q. — What took place in the council when Paul said he was on trial for believing in the resurrection of the dead?

A. — Acts xxiii. 7.

Q. — How excited did they become?

A. — Acts xxiii. 9.

Q. — What course did the Pharisees pursue towards Paul?

A. — Acts xxiii. 9.

Q. — What did the chief captain fear would happen to Paul, in the disturbance?

A. — Acts xxiii. 10.

Q. — What did the commander order his soldiers to do to Paul?

A. — Acts xxiii. 10.

Q. — In what way was St. Paul encouraged and sustained in his great trial?

A. — Acts xxiii. 11.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

I am composed of six letters, and mean part of plants or trees.
My 3, 1, 2 is a beverage.
My 1, 5, 2 a place sheltered from the wind.
My 6, 5, 3 the ocean.
My 4, 3, 1, 5 a low-lying locality.
My 6, 5, 3, 1 a stamp.
My 1, 5, 3 a meadow.
My 5, 4, 2 the close of the day.
My 4, 2, 3, 1 a delicate meat.
My 3, 4, 2 a Latin salutation.
My 2, 5, 1 a fish.
My 1, 3, 4, 2 to wash.
My 6, 3, 4, 2, to rescue.
My 4, 3, 6, 2, an ornamental vessel.
My 6, 3, 1, 5 auction.
My 5, 1, 6, 2 otherwise
My 5, 1, 4, 2, 6 fairies.
My 5, 3, 4, 2, 6 a part of a roof.
My 5, 3, 6, 2 comfort.
My 1, 5, 3, 4, 2 to depart.
My 1, 5, 3, 6, 2 an agreement.
My 6, 1, 3, 4, 2 a bondsman.

Answer.

MARCH 14. Pharaoh, Aaron, Sorrow, Obedience, Virtue, Egypt, Red sea. *Passover.*

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